

Taking a trip can be a very stressful event. There are some steps you can take to avoid the added stress of travel arrangements that do not work out or are not what you expected.

The majority of travel arrangements are made over the phone, therefore, good communication is a key to any successful transaction.

1. Make sure the travel agent understands exactly what type of travel arrangements you are requesting.
2. If the travel agent is booking you into a facility you are not familiar with, ask to see a brochure on the facility which explains the amenities. Ask the travel agent if they have booked people at that facility before.
3. Be aware that travel costs may fluctuate rapidly, therefore, the price you are quoted one day, may not be applicable later on.
4. Be sure the travel agency informs you of any cancellation provisions ~~before~~ you purchase any travel service.
  - a. Some travel agencies have you sign a statement that no refunds will be made if you are unable to complete your scheduled travel arrangements. This means no refunds will be made under any condition, even in the event of illness or death.
  - b. Some travel agencies have a cancellation fee, which is sometimes a percentage of the total price you paid for the travel service.
  - c. Be aware that you may incur additional expenses should you wish to change your original travel arrangements.
  - d. Make sure the travel agency explains any limitations, conditions, events, circumstances, or any other business or commercial factors that may affect the availability of the travel services and your ability to obtain a refund of moneys paid for the travel services.

5. If you cancel your travel arrangements you can expect the following:
  - a. You have the right to a refund within fourteen (14) calendar days from the date the refund is requested, of all moneys paid to a travel agency for travel services not performed in accordance with the contract for travel services, less any of the following amounts:
    - Any amounts for cancellation fees that were previously disclosed to you; and
    - Any amounts held by the ultimate provider of the travel services, or by a representative of the ultimate provider of travel services that the travel agent was required to contract with by the ultimate provider.
  - b. Be aware that if you signed a statement with the travel agency that no refunds will be given if travel services are canceled, you WILL NOT receive a refund.
  - c. If the travel agency has already paid a service provider for your travel arrangements, you may have to contact the service provider directly to request a refund. Refer to your cancellation provisions.
6. You should receive your ticket or other similar documentation for travel services from the travel agency, upon making full payment to the travel agency.
7. Do not give a travel agency your credit card number until you are ready to make travel arrangements through them.
8. At the time of payment, the travel agency, must furnish the consumer making the payment with a written statement setting forth the following information:
  - a. The name, business address, and telephone number of the travel agency;
  - b. The amount paid, the date of such payment, the purpose of the payment made, and an itemized statement of the

- c. balance due, if any;
- c. The name and address of the financial institution that maintains the travel agency trust account, and the name of the trust account;
- d. The name of the entity with which the travel agency has arranged travel services and pertinent information such as, but not limited to, the types of accommodation, dates and times of services, and all restrictions, limitations, conditions, and fee assessments that pertain to the person's right to cancel, obtain a refund, change itinerary, or make a claim for lost tickets; and
- e. The cancellation provisions of the contract between the travel agency and the consumer, and the rights and obligations of the parties in the event of such cancellation.

9. The travel agency must also provide you with a written disclosure of your consumer rights under Chapter 468L of the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) which regulates travel agencies. You should be presented with this statement no later than when the travel agency issues the ticket for travel services.
  - a. In the case of repeat customers of business accounts, the disclosure need only be given once, as long as the travel agency is assured that the customer of business is aware of their rights.
  - b. In the case of group travel, the agency need not provide a form to each member but must provide a form to the group leader, provided that the agency is assured the group leader will accept responsibility to inform their group members of their rights.
10. Check to see that the travel agency you are dealing with is licensed by calling the Regulated Industries Complaints Office at 587-3222 and press 1. Licensed travel agencies must provide proof of establishing

a client trust account in order to get their license.

If you are calling from the Neighbor Islands, call via the state toll free telephone number for Kauai 274-3141; the Big Island 974-4000; Maui 984-2400; Molokai and Lanai 1-800-468-4644; and enter extension 73222.

11. Check to see if the travel agency has any complaints filed against them by calling the Regulated Industries Complaints Office at 587-3222 and press 1. (Neighbor Islands, see phone numbers/extension stated above)
12. If you have a complaint against a travel agency, contact the Consumer Resource Center at 587-3222 and press 2. (Neighbor Islands, see phone numbers/ extension stated above)

**The Regulated Industries Complaints Office receives, resolves, investigates and prosecutes complaints relating to the industries, boards, and commissions regulated by the department.**

Call the DCCA **Consumer Resource Center** at **587-3222** and **press 2** if you have a consumer complaint against a merchant, car dealership, and other businesses and licensed professionals in Hawaii.

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We will assist you in handling your complaint.

The language of this brochure is for informational purposes only. This brochure is intended as a reference and does not provide legal advice. The information contained in this brochure is subject to change.

This printed material can be made available for individuals with special needs in braille, large print or audio tape. Please submit your request to the Complaints and Enforcement Officer at 586-2666.

# Tips on Travel Agencies

